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From the President

Michael S. Ellars (**BArch '00**), President
Andronicus Alumni Association

Dear Brothers,

Welcome to "The Weathervane," the newsletter for the Andronicus Alumni Association! I hope you will find it to be an excellent resource for keeping up with Alumni Association news and events.

Over the last three years, the Andronicus Alumni Association has undergone a dramatic transformation. Sparked by the arrival and interest of Brother Laura Schmidt of Anthemios – who was elected as the Worthy Grand Associate Architect at the National Convention last year – a full Executive Board was elected for the first time in over a decade. Since that time, the Alumni Association has grown strong enough to return to managing the Chapter House. This has been a welcome event for the Active Chapter as it has freed their time to concentrate on their studies.

One of my goals for my term as President of the Alumni Association is to increase alumni participation, particularly with older alumni. The Silver Alpha Rho Chi Medal ceremony last year honoring Andronicus Brother Howard Van Heuklyn demonstrated the potential for a strong alumni base of support in the Los Angeles area and beyond.

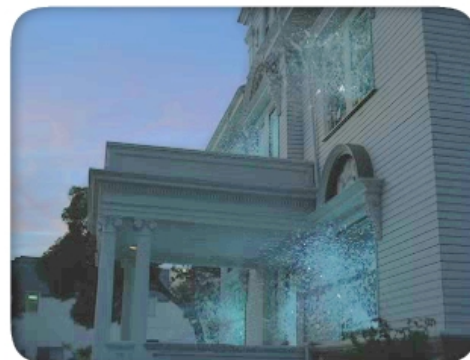
I believe providing meaningful activities and events is the key to increased participation. The Executive Board has proposed a series of events in the coming year, ranging from the formal (such as the Founders' Day dinner on the Queen Mary a few years ago) to the informal, to the immediately useful. Under consideration is a Founders' Day dinner, much like the one held on the Queen Mary for the 80th Anniversary, networking mixers, weekend barbeques, ARE Prep sessions and work day weekends at the chapter house.

However, providing these events would sap funds from the Alumni Association's only regular source of income, Chapter House rent. The Executive Board believes these funds would be

(See **ELLARS**, page 3)

Why a newsletter?

The Executive Board felt a need to expand our contact with other alumni, especially those who graduated more than ten years ago. While the Alumni Association web site (<http://www.andronicus alumni.org>) provides one means for staying in touch, we understand that not everyone has access to the Internet or feels comfortable using it. We believe that a newsletter will provide a more familiar source of information for people of all ages and abilities. However, please keep in mind that the Alumni Association web site will remain the best source for the latest alumni event information – as well as the great message boards!



Did they really blow up our house?

Yes, that is the Andronicus Chapter house in two recent Sprint commercials. Yes, that is real glass flying out of the windows. To get this effect, Sprint replaced all the panes in these windows with tempered glass (like in your car doors), and fired gelatinous pellets through time-synchronized air cannons from inside the house to make the glass shatter and burst out. Of course, they had to get this right on the first take! Afterward, Sprint replaced all the windows with new glass, cut on site. In addition to the new windows, we were also paid our usual filming compensation.

Treasurer's Report

John Sterni (**BSME '98**), Treasurer
Andronicus Alumni Association

House Progress

This year was a great year in housing improvements. There have been a couple of very notable projects. One of our long-running projects has been completed: new lighting of the façade of the Front House. The project called for lighting in the surrounding garden and on the front and side faces of the main house. Our goal has been to improve nighttime visibility and safety. Many thanks to Nirad Gupta (**BArch '03**) and Ross Barna of RAB Lighting of New Jersey for their generous donation of equipment and time in the installation of these lights.

Progress has been continuing on the second floor bathroom. The current project calls for a new tiled wall around the bathtub. Previously there had been a melamine wall that had aged and was leaking severely into the kitchen below. We would like to thank Michael Rabanera (**BA '96**) for his generous donation of slate tiles for use in the bathroom renovation.

Repairs to Room 31 have been completed. The room was in need of extensive repairs to the walls and to the electrical outlets, and one of the windows was cracked. Repairs included: patching holes in the walls, installation of a fan and ceiling lights, repairs to electrical outlets that were damaged and/or non-functioning, and new glass installed.

On a security note, the locks on the doors to the Front House and woodshop have been re-keyed. The door to the Studio in the Back House has also been outfitted with a new lock, one that can be opened either with a key or by combination.

Alumni Finances

The Alumni Association finances took a big turn in the recent year and a half after taking over most of the financial obligations that the Active Chapter had taken care of in the past.

The Alumni Association had made great strides in making itself financially solvent and at the same time improving the living conditions of the Andronicus Chapter house.

Some financial numbers included a positive cash balance and currently running at approximately 15% above operating cost, including maintenance of the Andronicus Chapter House. This includes the addition of DirecTV satellite television availability in all the rooms and the addition of bottled water service, telephone service and weekly house-cleaning services.

Additional income was received from a television commercial that was filmed at the house for an additional \$3000 in income after paying incurring cost from displacing two tenants for three days and donating \$3000 to the Andronicus Chapter. Other income includes \$660 from the USC School of Architecture for the lawn maintenance. In addition, a donation of \$423 was paid to the Active Chapter for the purchase of two folding tables and twenty chairs in time for the Student/Faculty dinner.

The future financial outlook for the house is neutral. With the upcoming graduation of three members in the Fraternity house and two borders, the Treasurer is currently looking for additional tenants to offset this disruption. Additionally, another USC Architecture student has moved into the last available empty room in this month. •

A View From Out There

Profile of an Andronicus Brother five years out of architecture school

Lucio Maramba (**Non-Graduate '97**)

Andronicus brother Keith Olsen graduate with a Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Southern California in the spring of 1997. After graduation, and upon returning to his home state of New York, Keith was employed at *Stephen Tilly Architect*, where he worked on several projects, including a recital hall at the **Music Conservatory of Westchester**, which is now under construction.

Keith is currently employed at one of Boston's more established and community-minded architecture firms, *Steffian Bradley Architects*. The firm is currently collaborating with several other local firms on the **Yawkey Center for Outpatient Care**, a half-million square-foot addition to the Massachusetts General Hospital. Although some would ar-

gue that Los Angeles and Boston contrast like night and day, for Keith the transition was a natural evolution for finding his own path in the architecture world.

Along with his former duties as Worthy Architect of the Andronicus Chapter at USC, Keith's community-minded interests in architecture were satisfied by his participation in Habitat for Humanity, as well as various historic preservation projects throughout his education. As a student volunteer for **Habitat for Humanity**, Keith participated in constructing affordable housing near the USC campus. In the summer of 1995 he participated in a historic preservation studio on the island of Fiji documenting and surveying various historical buildings.

(See **KEITH**, page 4)

ARCH Project Update

Andronicus Renovated Chapter House Project

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Erin Williams (**BArch '05**)
Worthy Architect, Andronicus Chapter

Last year, two graduate students studying historic preservation approached us to ask if they could study our chapter house. We said yes, and have learned a lot along the way. Jill Vesci and Vanessa Wexler completed a Historic Structures Report on the chapter house in December, and we have all been learning a lot from their input. They have provided us information that is both interesting and valuable in our quest to renovate the house. We now know more about the history of our beautiful house, and exactly what needs to be done to make it the best it can be. Jill and Vanessa even provided us with resources on how to do it. The next step in our quest is to create a non-profit corporation through which we can fundraise, since working on a historic house often requires special materials, or extremely skilled labor, which can run quite a bill. After that, we can go full force towards our goal of renovating the chapter house! To donate your services or to refer us to great building/preservation professionals you know of, contact us at apx@usc.edu.

We learned some interesting facts...

- It's the "Shenkland House," not the "Chandler House." The Shenklands were the family for

which the house was built, and were nearly as socially prominent as the Chandlers were!

- Those balconies you remember are not really balconies! They were just roofs for the porches, and originally had windows over them, not french doors.
- The house was designed by Sumner Hunt, a very prominent local architect also known for designing the Automobile Club of Southern California (a.k.a. the AAA building), and the Casa de Rosas.

Some work is finished...

- The School of Architecture arranged to have our lawn professionally maintained, and it looks beautiful.
- Nirad Gupta (**BArch '03**) has arranged to have landscape lighting donated by RAB Lighting, and has begun installation with the help of alumnus John Sterni (**BSME '98**).
- Over the past semester, Pledge Class Shot Blasters painted doors, finished stripping the dining room fireplace, added plants to our lawn, and painted parking spots in the back area.
- Alumnus John Sterni has installed new locks on several doors to provide better security.

(See **ARCH**, page 5)

(**ELLARS**, continued from page 1)

better spent on much-needed repairs around the Chapter House. During the last two board meetings of 2003, the Executive Board discussed the possibility of once again collecting annual alumni dues in order to make these proposed activities a reality.

About ten years ago, the Alumni Association embarked on upon the idea of collecting a lifetime membership fee upon initiation. At that point, the fee would remain in the Active Chapter's savings account, accruing interest until graduation, at which point the original principal would be extracted and given to the Alumni Association. In theory, it seemed like a great idea, but in practice, it has failed. The system relied on impeccable bookkeeping and organization, and, as such, it has been more than five years since the Chapter or Alumni Association collected any "lifetime membership" fees.

After moderate debate at the December meeting, the Executive Board proposed and accepted the establishment of annual alumni dues of \$35. This small amount, less than ten cents a day, will

help to fund alumni activities and events, in turn providing greater value to all of the Andronicus, alumni and actives.

The Executive Board understands that you may have questions or comments regarding the establishment of alumni dues and welcomes your comments. While the Andronicus Alumni Association will always recognize those brothers who have paid their lifetime membership fee, I, as president, ask you to show your support for the Alumni Association and our Fraternity, and help us get these activities under way.

Please take some time to read through this newsletter. If you have Internet access, you can also visit the Andronicus Alumni Association web site (<http://www.andronicusalumni.org/>), where you can find the most up-to-date information. Our web site also features online forums, or message boards, where you can meet and interact with fellow alumni.

Thank you for your support, and here's to a spectacular new year!

Fidelitas, Amor et Artes•

(KEITH, continued from page 2)

Based on Keith's academic interests it is no surprise to discover why the firm of Steffian and Bradley was appealing to him. While the firm's project sector groups are diverse, Keith's current focus is on medical related projects, including clinics, nursing homes, hospital units and additions to existing medical structures. According to Keith, the award-winning firm retains a small firm mentality, despite its relatively large 90-person size. Organizationally, architects are divided into several "studios," headed by one principal each. To facilitate continuity, teamwork and efficiency, these studios tend to stick together from project to project, allowing each team member to develop and each team to become more efficient.

Keith continues to devote time to his local chapter of Habitat for Humanity and is now a member of the construction committee. He is currently managing a "triple-decker" affordable housing unit in South Boston. The unit was designed to integrate with the existing neighborhood context, as well as allow various sized units for several families at well below the usual cost for the area. Throughout this project, Keith participated in community and governmental design and plan reviews. The project is now in the construction document phase.

I had a chance to interview Keith in Boston recently to get his thoughts on the transition from educational to professional life, but most importantly to get his thoughts on what skills he had learned (or did not learn) from school, and their impact on his growth as an architect.

Professional Practice Class...

From early on in his education, Keith was told by his professional peers to pay special attention to those "daunting" professional practice classes. When asked if he paid attention, Keith grinned and replied honestly, "sure... although I do wish I had paid a little more attention in class." Based on his current professional experiences, Keith has come to truly appreciate the details and nuances involved in the contracts between clients, architects and consultants, as well as how the relationships work best to make a successful design become a successful built piece of architecture.

Keith says that in school most students are so focused on design that it is easy to pass over the management aspects of an architect's job, such as contract negotiation, bidding and negotiation and construction administration. Building within a budget may not be the most exciting topic for an architecture student, but it is one of the most important issues architects face in the workplace. "[To find that balance] financially and on the community level is vital," explains Keith. Through experience, he has come to learn that understanding the construction process can ultimately make a person

a better designer. "By working with contractors to determine how things are constructed in reality," relates Keith, "you begin to understand the translation from your drawing intentions to the built form."

Some Points to Ponder...

When asked what advice he would give to a recent architecture graduate, he replied without hesitation, "be well rounded." Keith explains that he is always pleasantly surprised at how often he uses knowledge from his general education courses (which we were all required to take during college). "Pay attention to those professional practice classes," he adds with a smile. And remember that there are always opportunities for an architect to learn and grow from the world around them.

I joke with him about how he used to describe himself as a "jack of all trades, master of none." We both smile at that recollection. Perhaps there is a lesson to be learned from that old cliché... although now five years later there may be one significant revision; jack of all trades, master of some.

Epilogue...

More than a year has passed since this interview was conducted, and several significant developments have occurred in Keith's life. Of note is Keith's efforts to organize a New England Alumni Organization for Alpha Rho Chi. Details of his efforts can be found on the APX National website. Of most significance is his marriage to Janine Walits on October 12th, 2003. The wedding took place in Warwick, Rhode Island, where several Andronicus alumni were in attendance. We wish Keith & Janine the best of luck in their new life together!•

Thank You!

The Alumni Association Board would like to thank the following people for their generous donations to the Fraternity over the past year.

- Nirad Gupta (**BArch '03**) and Ross Barna. Nirad was instrumental in securing approximately \$4,000 in lighting and fixtures for illuminating the exterior of the house.
- Michael Rabenera (**BA '96**) for his donation of slate tiles towards renovation of the second floor bathroom. These tiles will be a great addition to the house and we hope that they will be around for the next 100 years.
- In our discussions about Alumni Association annual dues, Lucio Maramba (**Non-Graduate '97**) and John Sterni (**BSME '98**), were the first to pay the annual dues of \$35.

(*ARCH*, continued from page 3)

Some work remains to be completed...

- The main house and woodshop are in need of new roofs and drainage systems.
- The floors need to be resealed and possibly need rugs to prevent further damage from heavy use.
- The balconies need to be rebuilt, due to structural overload and water damage.
- Brick foundation needs to be repointed, due to mortar failure. This is a completely normal thing

with old buildings, and is the result of the correct relationship between the bricks and the mortar – mortar failure is always preferable to brick failure.●

[Editor's note: the complete Historic Structures Report can be reviewed in its entirety by any and all alumni who wish to do so. Contact the Active Chapter's faculty advisor, Professor Doug Noble, at the USC School of Architecture.]

National Alumni Dues

Your money put to work

Laura Schmidt (**BArch '99, MArch '00, Anthemios**)
Vice-President, Andronicus Alumni Association
Worthy Grand Associate Architect

A few short years ago, it seemed like being an alumnus of Alpha Rho Chi Fraternity meant very little and offered about the same. It was clear that over time, the fraternity's focus was clearly on the Actives. And as much as it may have been rewarding for the small number of alumni who managed to stay involved, this narrow focus hindered the actives as much as it did the alumni.

I don't know if it was just time for a revolution, or if change was already in the air, but about the same time that new life was breathed into the Andronicus Alumni Association, on the other side of the country, the same sentiments were being expressed by the alumni of the Metagenes Chapter. The glaringly obvious difference, however, between Metagenes and Andronicus is the fact that there is no longer an active chapter at Virginia Tech, but this didn't stop the alumni of that chapter from remaining involved. In fact, their involvement has forced the fraternity to take a serious look at what it has to offer its alumni, especially the few who had paid their national dues over the years. Because of this, many new programs specifically targeted toward alumni are in the works.

First, and I think, most importantly, is the advent of the regional get-together. Last summer two of these events were held on the east coast. It is my goal to offer a menu of regional get-togethers each year. I'm proud to say that the first of these events will be held in Los Angeles, thanks to the generous offer of Andronicus alumnus Lucio Maramba. Please take note of the advertisement for this event in this publication. I guarantee it will be a great time.

Secondly, there will be more focused attention to alumni on the national website. I hope that everyone has had a chance to visit www.alpharhochi.org. It is a nicely designed website, that holds a wealth of information, including just about every form anyone in this fraternity might

need to fill out available for download in PDF format. Currently, the alumni section of the site is a bit disorganized, but soon it will give all of the alumni associations the attention they deserve, make it easier to pay alumni dues by allowing electronic payments online, and introduce the entire fraternity to the distinguished faculty members throughout the country.

What I would consider the most exciting new program being offered to alumni is a national job board. Many brothers have been requesting one for years, but to little progress. Finally, one afternoon Andronicus WA Erin Williams and I sat down and figured out how we could do this. This will be an online application, and the code for it is being written as we speak. We all know that Alpha Rho Chi has given the architecture profession, and other professions, some of its greatest leaders, and now it will be so much easier for us alumni to find a brother to come work for us, or conversely find a brother to work under. Though the site is not up just yet, I am already starting to receive requests for listing from brothers all over the country. It looks like it will be a great success. Please do not hesitate to contact me if there is an opening at your company.

These things, together with successes from previous years, such as the ability to earn AIA/CES credits, has truly made being an alumnus or alumna of Alpha Rho Chi quite satisfying. However, I expect that many of you are wondering about how all this focus on alumni has affected the Actives. Truthfully, it is my belief that having a strong and broad alumni base inspires the Actives, and attracts rushees. In fact, after several years of rebuilding it's alumni base, and being told by the faculty of Virginia Tech that they wouldn't allow it, the Metagenes chapter is about to recolonize. The passion and dedication of the Metagenes alumni must have shone through, and not only attracted the students, but won over the faculty as well.

None of this would have been possible without

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(**SCHMIDT**, continued from page 5)

the alumni who pay their national dues. There have been hundreds of fantastic ideas over the years, but the constant limitation is the lack of alumni who pay their national dues. I've worked quite hard as the Worthy Grand Associate Architect to offer our alumni something of value so that they could feel confident that paying national alumni dues was worth the effort. The more alumni I will be able to convince, the more regional get-togethers and other alumni programs you will be able to enjoy. •

Please consider paying your alumni dues for 2004. It is \$50 and payable to "Alpha Rho Chi" Fraternity. Dues should be mailed to WGE Frank Kitchel, 913 Springhaven Dr., Libertyville, Illinois 60048.

We'd like to thank the following Andronicus brothers who paid their National Alumni Dues in 2003.

Dwight Broadneaux
Michael Ellars
Pierre Koenig
John Melcher
James Mock
Keith Olsen
Edward Pearson
Carl Raymond
Kenneth Schwartz

Upcoming events

March 11: **Andronicus 82nd Anniversary**

March 25-27: **57th National Convention**

The Radisson Hotel
New Orleans, LA

April 11: **Alpha Rho Chi 90th Anniversary**

April 17: **Founders' Day Event**

Sponsored by Active Chapter
Contact Chapter for details.

April 18: **Jazz in the Afternoon**

Los Angeles Regional APX Alumni
Gathering

March							April						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30	

Jazz in the Afternoon

Brought to you by the Grand Council and the Andronicus Alumni Association

Sunday, April 18th, 2004 1pm-5pm

At the home of Andronicus Alumnus Lucio Maramba

8373 Kenyon Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90045

Please join us on a spring afternoon to listen to a little music and gather with other Alpha Rho Chi brothers who live in the Los Angeles Area.

This will be the perfect chance to make some new friends, and to catch up with some old ones. Light refreshments and drinks will be provided.

Spouses and families are welcome.

Please contact Worthy Grand Associate Architect Laura Schmidt with any questions.

Tel: (310) 903-2630

E-mail: wgaa@alpharhochi.org

Contact Us

Do you need to contact one of the board members of the Andronicus Alumni Association? Here's how:

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